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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WACO, TX and ANADARKO, OK | November 5-9 2023 – A delegation of leaders from the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes will visit Waco in early November to meet with Waco leaders. A reception and presentation for the general public will be held at the Mayborn Museum from 6pm on Monday November 6th.

President Terri Parton of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes and a delegation of eleven tribal leaders in various capacities throughout the Tribe will visit Waco, TX from 5-9 November, 2023. The goal of the visit is to cultivate mutual understanding, connections, and new partnerships in Waco – especially in the areas of culture, education, agriculture and business. The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes now reside in Anadarko, Oklahoma, and include direct descendants of the tribes indigenous to the Waco area; the Wichita, Keechi, Waco and Tawakoni people.

This will be the first visit of its kind since 1912. Several Wichita Tribal Leaders including President Parton, former Wichita Tribal President Gary McAdams and James Ross, tribal elder visited Waco in 2014. However, the 2023 visit will be the largest delegation to visit Waco for a generation. Derek Ross, a member of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes and direct descendent of the Waco tribe, who has recently relocated with his family to Waco helped facilitate the visit. Derek is the son of James Ross. The Tribe is actively cultivating connections and relationships to prepare the ground for potential opportunities to reconnect tribal members with the region they once called home. The host committee is coordinated by Creative Waco, and includes representatives from City of Waco, Baylor University, Historic Waco Foundation, The World Hunger Relief Farm, The Taylor Museum, Waco Tours, and several Waco representatives with indigenous heritage.

The trip to Waco will include visits to sites of historic, cultural and spiritual significance, meetings with elected leaders, and decision-makers from both communities. Discussions will focus on mutually beneficial partnerships in the areas of cultural programming, food sovereignty, environmental and business initiatives.

On Monday November 6th, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to meet the delegation for a reception and presentation. Attendees will learn about the tribes' history, culture, language, ideas, and hopes...and even the correct pronunciation of "Waco". The event will take place at the Mayborn Museum on University Parks Drive in Waco from 6pm.

The event, titled "WE ARE WACO: reconnecting with the wí:ko:ʔ people" is free, but tickets are required, as space is limited. Please reserve your ticket for the event at: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/a5fhutw>

Anyone who would like to meet with the delegation during their visit or request an interview should contact President Parton.

ENDS

Wichita & Affiliated Tribes

A federally recognized indigenous tribe known to historians as the Wichitas, Wacos (written phonetically as **wí:ko:ʔ**), Taovayas, Tawakonis, and Kichais people. Their ancestors have lived in the Central and Southern Plains since prehistoric times. Now headquartered in the Anadarko area of Oklahoma, the tribe is governed by a President and Executive Committee who are elected to four-year terms by the enrolled tribal members.

<https://wichitatribe.com>

Creative Waco

This nonprofit organization is Waco's local arts agency. It exists to grow and support the artistic and cultural life of Waco and McLennan County. <https://creativewaco.org>

Mayborn Museum

The Mayborn Museum Complex celebrates the natural science and cultural history of Central Texas. This 143,000-square-foot building on the Baylor University campus sparkles with numerous vibrant exhibits and compelling hands-on activities for the whole family to enjoy over and over again. www.maybornmuseum.com